

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A control unit for an internal combustion engine having a three-way catalyst and HC adsorbent operatively arranged in order on an exhaust side of the engine,

said control unit being configured to ~~alternately~~ optimize control ~~air-fuel ratio (A/F) between a rich state and a lean state to change~~ of a temperature rise characteristic of said HC adsorbent by appropriate control of rich/lean exhaust for adjusting a temperature of said three-way catalyst.

10. (Previously Presented) The control unit according to Claim 9, further comprising a sensor which detects a temperature of said HC adsorbent.

11. (Previously Presented) The control unit according to claim 9,

wherein said control unit is configured to alternately control the A/F between a rich state and a lean state when the temperature of said HC adsorbent is within the predetermined fixed range.

12. (Previously Presented) The control unit according to claim 10,

wherein said control unit is configured to alternately control the A/F between a rich state and a lean state when the temperature of said HC adsorbent is within the predetermined fixed range.